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White Cliffs
NSW 2836

March 4, 2017

This is in response to the Draft Far West Regional Plan.

I live in White Cliffs a well known tourist spot for opal mining, underground living and a gateway to the vast outback due north. I have been living here for about 17 years and ran a gallery as a tourist attraction.

It looked like a good place to invest with sealed roads, power, water and rates in place.

Not to mention the many promises to a secure title for the licence.

That all changed with the federal determination of the Barkandji native title over this entire area. I believe some 5000 licenses were cancelled, not just cattle and sheep paddocks but also residencies and businesses. The government encouraged us by dangling a carrot in front of us and then stabbing us in the back, turning us into financial refugees by a stroke of a pen... so nothing but lies and deceit. Now its been declared a one billion dollar electorate!?

Interesting to note that this was done after the federal election and I am sure I won't vote for them ever again!

How are you going to fix this destruction with so many angry people around and who is going to invest anything here?

Communication

In the past we had good mobile coverage. With the CDMA network you could get coverage for about 50 kilometres, now with the G4x network you are pushing for 15Km.

If you are living behind some trees you get nothing. Some people had to invest in expensive repeaters which were not needed before. Telstra has got the monopoly in this area meaning expensive plans with no choices. Over 90% of phones available in the world will not work here due to quirky frequencies. Overseas and national tourists find it impossible to connect.

The outback installation of the NBN is turning more into a catastrophe as installers find it difficult to cope with non-standard conditions, they come and leave, I wonder how much money is wasted.

What data flow is concerned it can be fast but very often not faster then dial-up or if any at all. With cloud cover you can lose your phone and data.

Roads

For many years promises were made to seal the Cobb Highway to allow a safe connection to the South. Much more traffic and tourists would come from Melbourne, an extra 300km are added via Cobar or Broken Hill which makes the trip impossible for a long week-end.

Fuel

We pay about 50 cents more per litre of fuel compared to Wilcannia some 95 km away. Transport services are rare and expensive.

Services

Especially Road and Maritime services are a days travel away so if you have a fleet of cars you have to spend a whole day per car just for a rego check.

Australia post has increased its service time and a letter from Melbourne can take up to 3 weeks which is about the same service as 100 years ago.

Energy

Most of the electric energy is wasted as it travels long distances. It would therefore make a lot of good sense to encourage renewable energy in the outback and not trash it. Stand alone and feed into the grid would be nice as power fails often and you would not sit in the dark while you have solar panels on the roof. Power surges burn through equipment at an alarming rate! All the good solar plans have disappeared and people don't save much any more nor have they ever recovered the cost.

The modems for the NBN Sky Muster draw a lot of current, about 1kwh per day.

Not only get the units very hot, not ideal for our climate, there is also a substantial costs added to the power bill.

At 400 000 installations the outback grid has to supply about half a million Kw hours per day extra.

It looks like that local government has to fix what the federal government stuffs up.

Yours sincerely



Otto Rogge